BEN AND HIS COLT

Fielding Relates the Story of a Cruel Deception,

HOW A HIGH-BRED TURNED OUT

His Friend Bought a Brute with a Pedigree so Long that it Included Baslam's Animal.

My cousin, Bon Van Gustrick, lives in country, and pretends to like it, he doesn't. He is only a hayseed marriage. The estimable lady to is years ago, he was united better or for worse (according to ther one views it from his standnt or here) owned a fine place in arwood, N. J., and as Ben's restwas thirteen by thirteen, up se flights, in the rear, with the rent



weeks overdue, the young couple cided to occupy their suburban he Briarwood is dull. Like most other pretty places near New York its finest untry seats are owned and occupied by the weeping grass widows of Canadian exiles. For a few months succeeding the honeymoon, Hen was sustained by the novelty of getting three square meals a day, and being sure of them in advance; but too much peace at last became monotonous and he was obliged to hunt around for fads to occupy his time. When I visited him last spring, I found him interested in horses. He had bought two or three high-bred colts, which he intended to rear in luxury.

Ben knows enough about a horse to stay away from a race track and no more. This valuable knowledge is, unhappily, far from universal, but its posse does not necessarily make a man an expert. However, it seemed to me that Ben hadn't been cheated very badly in the prospective record breakers that were prancing about his place last spring. But when I went out to see him about a month ago, these former favorites were forgotten.

He hurried me out into the stable before allowing me to pay my respecta to the family. In one of the stalls I found a new-born, melancholy beast as thin as a towel-rack, which it resembled

closely when in repose.
"Look at him," said Ben. "There's s world beater. Don't you know he

"The marks of a good colt," said he, "are an intelligent eye and an attentiv ear. Don't you know they are? Look at that eye! Just run over the list of your friends and acquaintances and see if you can recall an eye like that. And ears! You can see that he's listen-

ing to every word we say."
I admitted that the brute had wonderful ears. Then I asked Ben where

he got this remarkable creature.

"Johnny Green gave me the tip," he replied. "I call it very square of him. I need to think he had a grudge against me on account of a little practical joke I put up on him. He and two or three ther fellows were going fishing, a couple of years ago, up in some queer corner of Maine, three or four hundred miles from a Manhattan cocktail. Knowing that it was a prohibition country, they laid in a big bottle of rum to raske milk punches with. I got hold of the bottle just before they started; poured out all but a little of the stuff, and filled it up with a mixture of vinepar and kerosene oil. They didn't try it till they get away up in the wilderness where they met an old restic who kept some cows, and who agreed to fur-nish them with a superior quality of milk if they would let him in on the punches. The boys had just come in from a hard day's tramp and were dying for a drink; but they didn't enjoy it so much as they



A MD CASE OF WROCPERS CORGE.

ted. After a few swallows they gave it up and accused the old fellow of feeding his cows on deleterious sub-stances. He repelled the accusation with scorn, drank all the punches himself and swore that it was the best iquer he'd tasted in seven years.

"When the beyn came back they didn't exactly scene me of playing this brick on them, but I always thought I trick on them but I always thought I was under suspicion. Therefore, when Johany came to me a month ago and told me about the celebrated animal which was the dam of this colt, I winked the other eye. He told me that the owner of the mare was hard up and must sell her right away. I didn't bits ton quick. I investigated and made must that the story was straight before I purchased. Here Ben took some memoranda from his pocket, and with their help hid before me the colt's pedigree. This list of famous ancesters included nearly all the troffing horses that have honored the turf during the past century and extended back till it hat have honored the turf during the past century and extended back till it was lest alpht of in the shadows of aniquity. It seemed as if, with a little more research, he might have shown lessest from the only two horses that were not left at the post when Nosh seted as stuciar for a new race.

I did not have the pleasure of seeing Bon's remarkable cost again for week or more He had grown in

"Pro sold off all the other colts on the place," said Bee on this occasion. What was the use of keeping them? der dectionately on his spider-legged der, "They didn't have the points at you know they didn't? I kept

Bon's you know they didn't? I kept noticing differences between them and a really high-bred colt like this one. Look at those shoulders! They show the races. They are sharp to cut the air. Bon's you know they are?"

I was obliged to confess in this instance that there was something poculiar about the colt's shoulders. They were sharp, as Bea said, and his back came down like a toboggan slide, so that anything put upon it would alide that anything put upon it would slide off ever his head like an avalanche.

"I wouldn't stand behind him," said en. "He's an animal of spirit, and metimes he kicks. When he dees, whatever happens to be behind him is beyond repair. I should hate to send you back to your family in a basket. I tell you these resers are uncertain in their dispositions."

I hastily put myself beyond the reach of injury; and by and by we went into the house where we spent a very pleas-ant evening discussing the celt. Mrs. Van Gastrick, like a good wife, was in-terested in everything which pleased her husband; and I learned that she frequently visited the celt, and gave him medicine for various complaints incident to his tender age.
Because of this knowledge, I was not

surprised, on my next visit, to find Mrs. Van Castrick in the stable. We were told that she was there by Ben's little boy who met us at the station.

"Billy-" which was the name of the four-legged phenomenon-"is very sick,"



BEN PREPARES TO SELL THE COLT.

said the boy. "Mamma's taking care of

Ben looked worried, and we hastened our steps. We found that Mrs. Van Gastrick had adopted heroic measures. Billy was standing in four tubs of warm mustard water, and a collar of stockings wet with liniment was around his This decoration did not strike me as becoming to his peculiar style of beauty. However, Billy seemed to like it, and he wagged his high bred cars with

evident content. "What's the matter with poor little Billy?" asked Ben, in a voice full of

"He's got the whooping cough," re plied Mrs. Van Gastrick, and I thought

her on the verge of tears. "You know, Mr. Fielding," she continued, turning to me, "that our little daughter has had it for more than a week. I have tried, of course, to keep her in the house, but yesterday she ran away, and I found her playing in the stable. This forenoon Billy broke out with it, and he coughs in a perfectly

dreadful way."

Probably Billy, being an unsually intelligent animal, understood this conversation and felt called upon to support Mrs. Van Gastriek's assertion. He oughed loud and long.
"That's it, and no mistake," said Ben.

a bale of hay and was endeavoring to control my feelings. I could not immediately command my voice.
"By Jove, he's affected to tears," said

Ben. "I say, Howdy, it's dreadful, isn't it? Do you think it will kill him?" "I'll tell you what I think, Ben." said L "He didn't catch that from any member of your family. He inherited it. In that pedigree you've emitted the most important individual. I allude to the Illustrious beast which balked with Balaam.

"You don't mean "Yes, old man, the suspicion which has been growing on me for some weeks is confirmed by that ory of distress. Those ears, those heels, that voice! Ben, old boy, your high-bred colt is a mule."

And just then Billy brayed again. It was a sound to remove all doubt from the most prejudiced hearer. Ben turned white and then red. A second later he was sprinting for the house at a ten second gait. I found him over-

hauling his double-barreled shotgun. "I'm going over to have a little talk with Johnny Green," said he, and his amile had a distinct wire edge on it.
"I want to persuade him to purchase this colt and bring him up as a member of his family. I hope," he continued, sticking a couple of cartridges into the gen, "that he will take a proper view of the situation.

It was Mrs. Green who met us at the

"Johnsy saw you coming," said she, "and he stepped out the back way. We expect him home again in about six expect him menths." HOWARD FIM.DING.

sure to Be a Bore. Hostes-May I introduce you to Miss

Wag-Well, if her name isn't Anna. Harper's Bazar.



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